



Joint Information Center - JIC Release No. 800
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DPHSS Issues Guidance Memos 2021-26 & 2021-27; Medical & Religious Exemption for COVID-19 Vaccination Forms Available

Today, the Department of Public Health and Social Services (DPHSS) issued Guidance Memorandums 2021-26 and 2021-27 relative to COVID-19 Testing and case investigation, and Screening Testing in schools.

Guidance Memo 2021-26: COVID-19 Testing, Case Investigation and Contact Tracing, Isolation, Quarantine, and Monitoring of COVID-19 Positive Individuals and Contacts in Schools

Based on Executive Order No. 2021-23, Pre-K through 12th grade school campuses are authorized to resume in-person instruction, subject to applicable DPHSS Guidance Memorandums. The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to efficiently facilitate COVID-19 testing, case investigation and contact tracing in schools. A robust and responsive testing infrastructure is essential to keeping our schools safe including the layered mitigation approach.

A. SCREENING FOR COVID-19

1. Daily Symptom Screening/Checks

- a. Schools shall conduct daily screening of symptoms among students, teachers, and staff to identify those who may be contagious so that measures, such as testing for COVID-19, can be taken to prevent further transmission;
- b. Schools shall adopt a testing strategy that provides testing on a regular basis (especially to those individuals who are not fully vaccinated) and where results are reported rapidly. Furthermore, screening testing should be promoted to those students, teachers, and staff who are not fully vaccinated;
- c. Steps should be taken to maintain confidentiality of results and protect privacy of students, teachers, and staff; and

2. Schools will be responsible for distributing and collecting consent forms for all students, teachers, and staff, consider one-time consent forms for this screening testing plan, which can be utilized throughout the academic year.

- a. This consent form will include the purpose of testing, authorization for students, teachers, and staff to be tested, information about COVID-19 testing as well as a privacy statement;
- b. The School POC will be responsible for maintaining the signed consent forms prior to the testing of students, teachers, and staff;
- c. Consent forms allow for the school health counselor or designee to be notified of positive results to conduct the in-school contact tracing of positive cases;
- d. Parents/legal guardians/authorized representatives should be informed that confirmatory testing may be needed as determined by DPHSS Containment Branch; and

- e. In the event a parent/legal guardian/authorized representative decides to revoke consent, written and timely documentation is required and should be submitted immediately to the School POC.

3. Symptomatic Individuals

If a student, teacher or staff is identified on campus as having symptoms consistent with COVID-19 by a school health counselor, or trained individuals, the following steps should be taken:

- a. Students:

- i. The parent/legal guardian/authorized representative of the student should be informed and the student should be tested for COVID-19 as soon as possible. Efforts should be made to ensure the student is picked up by parent/legal guardian/authorized representative immediately if the test result is positive;
- ii. If the test result is negative, the school health counselor will assess the student based on their school protocol; and
- iii. If testing for COVID-19 occurs outside the school, the parent/legal guardian/authorized representative should notify the school of positive test results so that appropriate measures can be taken to break the chain of transmission.

- b. Teachers and Staff:

Teachers and staff shall be tested for COVID-19 as soon as possible. Teachers and staff who are tested outside the school shall notify the School POC of positive test results so that appropriate measures can be taken to break the chain of transmission.

Read Guidance Memo 2021-26 in its entirety [here](#).

Guidance Memo 2021-27: Additional Guidance Relative to Screening Testing for In-Class Operation for K-12 Schools

The purpose of this Memorandum is to provide guidance on the screening testing program introduced in the Department of Public Health & Social Services (DPHSS) Guidance Memorandum 2021-23 RE: School Resumption of In-Person Learning for Pre-K to 12 Relative to Executive Order 2021-23. Following **Executive Order 2021-23, Relative to Authorizing the Resumption of In-Person Learning**, all schools shall submit a testing plan as part of school mitigation strategies.

Screening testing is part of a layered prevention strategy that involves testing asymptomatic persons without recent known or suspected exposure to SARS-CoV-2 for early identification, isolation and disease prevention. Early identification of asymptomatic cases through screening testing can ensure rapid isolation, identification and quarantine of close contacts, which will minimize disruption to in-person instruction. COVID-19 testing conducted at schools shall utilize non-invasive molecular or antigen nasal tests. As part of this screening testing plan, schools shall set a goal to test ten percent (10%) of its population every other week within 90 days of implementation of their testing plan.

All school testing plans are to be emailed to DPHSS Surveillance Branch at dphss.surveillance@dphss.guam.gov. Testing plans are subject to review by DPHSS. Schools may reference [DPHSS Guidance Memorandums 2021-16](#), [2021-23](#), and [2021-26](#) found on www.dphss.guam.gov/covid-19-jic-releases-executive-orders for additional information relative to COVID-19.

Read Guidance Memo 2021-27 in its entirety [here](#).

Medical & Religious Exemption for COVID-19 Vaccination Forms Available

Individuals seeking a medical or religious exemption for COVID-19 vaccination shall submit an official request with supporting document(s) to publichealth@dphss.guam.gov, or deliver to DPHSS Immunization Program, located at Castle Mall, Unit #9, 130 University Drive, Mangilao, from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m., Monday through Friday. Employees may continue to work while waiting for issuance of DPHSS medical exemptions. Employees who receive medical or religious exemptions shall be required to test for COVID-19 once a week.

The medical exemption for COVID-19 Vaccination form is available for download [here](#). The religious exemption request for COVID-19 vaccination form is available for download [here](#).

For the latest information on COVID-19, visit dphss.guam.gov or guamrecovery.com. For inquiries on COVID-19, contact 311 through a local number, or call the Joint Information Center at (671) 478-0208/09/10.

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